



Our Mission. Your Safety. Your Mobility. Your Economic Opportunity.

Idaho Transportation Department

News Release

2/19/2015

Contact:

Reed Hollinshead

Public Information Specialist

(208) 334-8881

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ITD southeastern Idaho Malad-area foreman Thorpe sets state standard for road clearing

Note: Winter weather is in the forecast this weekend, so this may be especially timely.

POCATELLO - As an agency, the Idaho Transportation Department strives for the best service possible to its main customers, Gem State drivers. Doug Thorpe, an ITD foreman based out of the maintenance shed in Malad, knows a thing or two about exemplary performance.

Last year, Thorpe was the top winter performer in the entire state, with a mobility index of 92 percent, which is the percentage of time during winter-weather conditions that a road is in good shape and vehicles are allowed to move freely. ITD's target is 55-percent mobility during those conditions.

Click here for [Picture 1](#) and [Picture 2](#) of Thorpe.

"The mobility index measures the percentage of time precipitation falls on freezing pavement without forming ice," said Ed Bala, ITD district engineer for District 5 in the southeast area of the state. It essentially reports how effective the crews are before a storm (pre-treating).

The storm index measures ice duration per unit of storm severity, and it reports how effective crews are during a storm. On this measure, a lower number is better, and ITD's target is 0.25.

Thorpe, whose area includes the Malad Pass, scored a storm index of 0.02. His crew takes care of Interstate 15 as it passes over the Malad Summit. Winters can be severe.

"The performance by itself is excellent, but what makes it even more incredible is that Doug and the crew achieved it with one less crew member than they had the year before," said Bala.

"They were able to achieve that high level of performance because they did not keep doing everything the same way," he explained. "They innovated how they work. Rather than continue the typical winter schedules, they use more proactive scheduling, taking advantage of weather forecasts and data available to them."

Bala added that the crew does an in-depth debriefing after every storm to learn how they can improve. And most importantly, he said, "every member of the crew completely owns their outcomes and they have a true spirit of accountability."

Questions? Visit us online at itd.idaho.gov, follow ITD on Twitter (@IdahoITD) or Facebook and check travel conditions at 511.idaho.gov or dial 5-1-1. Please slow down in highway construction zones and pay attention. Safety for drivers and workers is our highest priority.

###